IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An aluminum nitride powder comprising: ~~characterized in that it has local maximum values in size in regions of from 3 to 15 μm, from 0.5 to 1.5 μm and 0.3 μm or less, the proportions of particles in the respective regions are~~

from 40 to 70% of coarse particles having a size of 3 to 15 μm,

from 25 to 40% of medium particles having a size of 0.5 to 1.5 μm, and

from 0.5 to 20% of fine particles having a size of 0.3 μm or less,

the percentages being on [[the]] a volume basis, and [[it]]

wherein the aluminum nitride powder has an oxygen amount of from 0.5 to 1.5 mass%.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): An aluminum nitride non-fired molded body ~~characterized by~~ comprising a molded body of a powder mixture ~~containing~~ comprising the aluminum nitride powder as defined in Claim 1 and a sintering aid.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): An aluminum nitride sintered body which is a sintered body of the aluminum nitride non-fired molded body as defined in Claim 2, ~~characterized by having~~ wherein the aluminum nitride sintered body has a thermal conductivity of at least 190 W/m・K and a shrinkage factor represented by the percentage of {(dimensions of the molded body before sintering)-(dimensions of the sintered body after sintering)}/(dimensions of the molded body before sintering) of at most 15%.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The aluminum nitride sintered body according to Claim 3, ~~which contains~~ comprising the sintering aid in an amount of from 1 to 5 parts by mass per 100 parts by mass of the aluminum nitride powder.

Claim 5 (Original): The aluminum nitride sintered body according to Claim 3 or 4, wherein the sintering aid is yttrium oxide or calcium oxide.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A process for producing the aluminum nitride powder ~~as defined in~~ according to Claim 1, ~~which comprises~~ comprising:

dispersively mixing a raw material aluminum powder having an average particle size of at most 40 μm and an oxygen amount of at most 0.5 mass% with a nitrogen gas in a proportion of at most 100 g per 1 Nm^3 of the nitrogen gas,

atomizing the gas into a reaction tube for nitriding, and

collecting the product in a collection system, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the oxygen concentration at a portion at which the temperature will be at least 100°C in the reaction tube and the collection system is controlled to be at most 100 ppm, and the product is taken out at a temperature of at most 100°C.

Claim 7 (Original): The process according to Claim 6, wherein the formed aluminum nitride powder has a BET specific surface area of at least 10 m^2/g and a value of the oxygen amount (mass%)/the specific surface area (m^2/g) of from 0.1 to 0.2.

Claim 8 (New): The aluminum nitride powder according to claim 1, wherein the coarse particles have a size of 5 to 10 μm and are present in an amount of from 50 to 60 volume %.

Claim 9 (New): The aluminum nitride powder according to claim 1, wherein the medium particles have a size of 0.8 to 1.3 μm and are present in an amount of from 25 to 35 volume %.

Claim 10 (New): The aluminum nitride powder according to claim 1, wherein the fine particles have a size of 0.05 to 0.25 μm and are present in an amount of from 5 to 15 volume %.

Claim 11 (New): The aluminum nitride powder according to claim 1, wherein the coarse particles have a size of 5 to 10 μm and are present in an amount of from 50 to 60 volume %, the medium particles have a size of 0.8 to 1.3 μm and are present in an amount of from 25 to 35 volume %, and the fine particles have a size of 0.05 to 0.25 μm and are present in an amount of from 5 to 15 volume %.

Claim 12 (New): The aluminum nitride powder according to claim 1, wherein the aluminum nitride powder has an oxygen amount of from 0.8 to 1.3 mass%.